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INTERIM REPORT ON GERMAN-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP MONTHTaegliche Rundschau
Berlin, 21 Nov 1953

The third meeting of the committee responsible for directing the events of the German-Soviet Friendship Month was held on 20 November 1953 at the Berlin headquarters of the Society for German-Soviet Friendship. Deputy Minister-President Otto Nuschke, chairman of the committee, presided over the meeting. Gottfried Gruenberg, secretary general of the society, gave the following interim report on the results achieved to date:

"At present, there are more than 100,000 honorary functionaries of all parties and mass organizations active in 6,876 committees. More than one million workers participated in the ceremonies marking the opening of the German-Soviet Friendship Month on 1 November 1953. Outstanding cultural events were held; for example, 7,500 persons attended the recital in Erfurt of the national chorus, under the direction of Prof Sveshnikov, featuring Russian songs. During its 3-week sojourn in the GDR, the Soviet delegation of educators, headed by Prof Konstantinov, gave 90 lectures and held 68 discussions with members of the intelligentsia. Almost 40,000 visitors attended these events.

"However, the most important persuasive work is not a mass event, but work done in small groups and discussions held on a small scale. Seminars for agitators were organized everywhere. In Bezirk Leipzig alone, 48 "enlightenment" conferences and 27 courses for functionaries have been held to date. In the first days of the German-Soviet Friendship Month, the agitators in Karl Marx Stadt have already succeeded in recruiting 866 new members, in establishing 700 block discussion groups (Haus and Hofgemeinschaften), in selling 88 copies of the Great Soviet Encyclopedia, and in arranging 16 book exhibits."

The results of this work are shown in the fact that 50,000 new members have already been recruited for the society. A great number of voluntary obligations were undertaken and carried out by workers and peasants. Thus, the workers at furnace No 5 of the J. V. Stalin Metallurgical Combine in Fuerstenberg, constituting a German-Soviet Friendship brigade, fulfilled their pledge to increase their daily ore-smelting quota from 429 to 596 tons.

In his report, Secretary General Gruenberg criticized the poor work of the DEFA (German Film Corporation) "Augenzeuge" presumably news films bearing the title "Eye Witness". He stated that the "Augenzeuge" was guilty of a poor showing in dealing only superficially with the Society for German-Soviet Friendship, a movement involving millions of people.

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